First Hour, First Moment

A Resistor

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Summary

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Description:

I'm searching for someone. A friend of mine." At that, his tail twitched, and his tone turned playful. "Really? This is a big city, could take a while…"

1. First Hour, First Moment

Freya had always wanted to visit Lindblum. Hearing stories from those that crossed Gizamaluke's Grotto, the city was always just out of eyeshot from Burmecia's gates. It 'held sights and experiences that she simply had to see', according to the numerous other soldiers she'd spoken to about their time in the grand city.

Standing on the Financial District's main street wringing her hands, she didn't know where to begin. The morning light poured down between the tall buildings, accentuating the different colours on display in the grass patches between the stone seating; plants that would never have survived in Burmecia's unforgiving rain. She wanted to feel the sun's rays on her fur, it made her feel out of place in her travelling garb; an obscured red and brown shape, eyes hidden behind her hair in a town of people dressed for the weather. She stuck out as an outsider, another rat trying to make her way in a city that wasn't her own, she thought.

"Where am I meant to begin?" She muttered to herself.

Suddenly, she felt a hand reach up and gently slap her back. “Well, aren’tcha in luck today? I can give ya the Tantalus patented Lindblum Tour if you want, lady!” Turning her head in confusion, she was met with a dishevelled blonde boy that she surmised was around twelve. He strode in front of her with a cocksure swagger. “There’s people like you around here all the time, all wide eyed and lost.”

“Excuse me? Were you watching me?” She narrowed her eyes at him.

“Sure, a babe like you is hard to miss!” He winked at her, lecherously. She already hated this annoying little scamp. “C’mon, we’ll have a blast.” He motioned ahead.

She couldn’t shake the suspicious feeling growing in the back of her mind. “All for the low price of a hundred gil, right? I’ll pass. Now run along.”

He feigned a gasp, shaking his head. “No ma’am! Completely free of charge, not a single gil.” He raised his right leg, clapping his hands together in what she could only assume was some kind of salute. “The Tantalus honor!”

She decided to throw caution to the wind. She could always throttle him if he tried anything. Sighing in resignation, she gestured ahead. “Fine, I’ll follow you. No tricks, you little devil.”

He flashed her a smile, then took off walking towards the market square, tail flicking around carelessly. She assumed the boy was a Hyur at first sight, now he looked more like some crossbreed with a monkey. He clearly wasn’t native to Lindblum, much like herself. So where had someone as unique looking as him come from? The boy confidently waved or nodded to those that he passed. He clearly held himself in high regard, they must have looked like an interesting pair. A wayward Dragon Knight and a confident little Casanova.

“So what brings you here? Someone wearing all that stuff can’t just be here for a visit, right?” He called back to her.

She wasn’t sure if she was comfortable with this… *child* knowing about her search. It was a matter that she desired to hold close to her chest, not something to spill to what she assumed to be a street urchin. Though he *did* have a trustworthy aura about him; like he carried a world of secrets and street

knowledge in that head of his. If any kind of person had seen Sir Fratley, surely it would be his type?

“I’m searching for someone. A friend of mine.”

At that, his tail twitched, and his tone turned playful. “Really? This is a big city, could take a while…” She knew what he was trying to get at.

“He could be anywhere by now, but I have to try. Perhaps the local inns may remember him?” She suggested, hoping to gleam whatever she could without giving him the wrong ideas.

His eyes lit up, and he stopped dead in his tracks. “Yeah, I bet old Tony’ll know! He gets all kinds of people, and he keeps a logbook.” the kid pointed toward what she assumed was the inn.

After entering, she was met with a warm glow of light from the window, and a short middle aged man behind the counter. Upon seeing her, he raised an eyebrow. “Huh. Not often we get Burmecians. Lookin’ for a room? It’s a hundred gil a night.”

She stepped forward. “Not exactly, I was wondering if you could help me. Has another Burmecian by the name of Fratley stayed here recently?”

“Haven’t had any Burmecian patrons in a while, but let’s have a look.” He grabbed a large tome, flipping through what looked to be years worth of pages: this inn was clearly a popular one. Burmecian inns had the same cold, blue decorations as the rest of the kingdom’s buildings; hardly a welcoming sight to newcomers. This inn however, exuded a quaint warmth that Freya was grasping at the depth of. The wood beneath her feet, the suspended candle lighting above her head, even the small tea set behind her near the seating: it was foreign to her, yet felt oddly nostalgic.

“Oh yeah, that ‘Iron-Tail’ guy? Been nearly a year since I last saw him, sorry lady.” She had the feeling this was how every appraisal she made in Lindblum would go. It was like following a shadow. Next would be Treno, then Alexandria… and beyond if she had to.

She thanked him, and stepped back outside with the happy-go-lucky child in tow. He must have noticed her frown. “Hey, come with me! I know some people, I can ask ’em.” he spoke a little quieter, as if he were trying to placate her.

She’d had enough. “Why are you doing this? You’re a kid, surely you’ve got something better to

be doing than following me like a pup?" she studied his face, trying to detect any hint of insincerity. There *had* to be something that he wanted. People never did anything without expecting something in return.

He recoiled, shrinking a little. "You don't need a reason to help people." he bounced back. His words carried a subtle conviction, accentuated by a gleaming smile.

For a moment, Freya was speechless. Perhaps there was more to this boy than she initially thought.

"That, and I'd hate to see a girl like you look sad."

She couldn't help but snicker; this kid's attempts at flirting definitely needed work. "I'm sorry for acting so rude. How about we start again? My name is Freya Crescent. I'm a Dragon Knight from Burmecia, and as I'm sure you know by now, I'm searching for Sir Fratley." A succinct description of all that she was, she supposed.

He scrunched his nose up at the mention of her lost lover. "Is he your boyfriend?"

A good question. Freya wasn't sure what to call him; she thought it deeper than that: a chivalric

explorer at heart that sought to pave his way across the world, beyond even the reaches of the sea. Only to never return. Back in her days of training, who wouldn't fall for such a man? She owed him this much at least.

"Yes. Yes, he is." She was saying it more for herself than to humor him.

He almost looked disappointed. "Damn. Well…" he raised his arms again, stomping his right foot. A very odd salute. "Zidane Tribal, of the Tantalus crew! It's nice to put a name to the face, Freya. Let's go to the market, grab something to eat and then we can start looking. How's that sound?"

She returned his smile. Perhaps he wasn't *completely* unbearable…

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